SPEECH

OF

WENDELL PHILLIPS, ESQ.

AT THE

WORCESTER DISUNION CONVENTION,

JANUARY 15, 1857.

Mr. President:

We are assembled to consider the expediency of seeking a dissolution of the Union. For my part, I am for the dissolution of the Union, and I seek it as an Abolitionist. I seek it, first and primarily, to protect the slave. My second motive is, to protect the white race. Primarily, it is an Anti-Slavery measure. I object to the letter of Mr. Wilson, and to all that argument of which his letter is a type, that it is treason to the Anti-Slavery movement — to the philosophy of it. No man deserves the name of an Abolitionist who, in arguing the slave question, sets out with the assumption that any human institution is to be saved at all hazards, come what may of the slave. The gist of Mr. Wilson's letter is, that in no possible contingency, for no possible purpose, will he allow the Union to be touched. He is not a fit leader in the Anti-Slavery enterprise, if he lays down any such principle. I do not know where my opposition to slavery will lead me; but I know this, that wherever it leads me, I will go, until I reach the slave. (Loud applause.) The Abolitionist gives no pledge to his fellow, except this — that he will make his way over every obstacle, in order to reach the slave. In Mr. Wilson's letter, and in that whole tone of argument of which it is the representative, the Union is a foregone conclusion. That is anchored. No matter how much you may prove against it, — no matter how much the course of events may open your eyes to new interests and duties, — no matter what form the question may take, — you must pledge yourself not to touch the Union. How absurd the pretence of argument with a man who has made that pledge at the outset! — he is not fit to argue. On so momentous a question, we have no right to consider any thing but truth and justice as settled — all mere institutions are afloat. We are launching a great argument; sounding on and on in the voyage of statesmanship, with nothing but despair behind. We

do not know where our vessel will take us. Common sense requires that we should keep every door open, free to go wherever the issue leads us. Slavery is so momentous an evil, that in its presence all others pale away. No thoughtful man can deem any sacrifice too great to secure its abolition. The safety of the people is the highest law. In this battle, we demand a clear field and the use of every honorable weapon. Even the monuments of our fathers are no longer sacred, if the enemy are concealed behind them.

This, Mr. President, is my first claim upon every man who has an Anti-Slavery purpose. One of the greatest, if not the greatest question of the age, is that of free labor. I do not know, — no man can prophecy, — what sacrifices it will demand, no human sagacity divine what shape it will acquire in the kaleidoscope of the future. Nobody can foresee the combinations that will be necessary in order to secure liberty, and turn law into justice. The pledge we make to each other, as Abolitionists, is, that to this slave question, embodying as it does, the highest justice and the most perfect liberty, synonymous as it is with Right, Manhood, Justice, with pure Religion, a free Press, an impartial Judiciary, and a true Civilization, we will sacrifice every thing. If any man dissents, he is not, in any just sense, an Abolitionist. If he has not studied the question enough to know, that it binds up in itself all considerations of government, then he is not worthy of being called an Abolitionist. The fate of four millions of slaves, linked as it is with the welfare of the white race, with the purity of religion, with freedom of conscience and thought, with civil liberty, with an impartial judiciary, with personal character, with all civil rights, is a question deserving of every sacrifice. Then, when you come to the Union — what is it? This momentous something, to which every possible importance of the slave question is to be sacrificed — what is it? What has the Union ever done? Where are its merits? Who knows them? Who has stated them? I know of but one; it has preserved peace between thirty-one States; — that is all its virtue!

Mrs. Abby Kelley Foster (interrupting) — Is that a merit?

Mr. Phillips — They who look on peace as a necessary condition of all progress or civilization would doubtless so regard it. For my own part, I do not think that peace between sin, and servility masquerading as virtue, is a benefit! (Loud applause.) I think, when Massachusetts undertook to be the bloodhound of South Carolina, in order that there might be peace between the two States, it was an exceedingly doubtful benefit. But what else has the Union ever done? Some claim that she

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is the mother of commerce. I doubt it. I question whether the genius and energy of the Yankee race are not the parent of commerce and the fountain of wealth, much more than the Union. That race, in Holland, first created a country, and then, standing on piles, called modern commerce into being. That race, in England, with territory just wide enough to keep its eastern and western harbors apart, monopolized for centuries the trade of the world, and annexed continents only as treasure-houses wherein to garner its wealth. Who shall say that the same blood, with only New England for its anchorage, could not drag the wealth of the West into its harbors? Who shall say that the fertile lands of Virginia and the Mississippi enriched her because they willed to do so, and not because they were compelled? As long as New England is made of granite and the nerves of her sons of steel, she will be, as she always has been, the brain of North America, united or disunited; and harnessing the elements, steam and lightning, to her car of conquest, she will double the worth of every prairie acre by her skill, cover ocean with her canvas, and gather the wealth of the Western hemisphere into her harbors.

I dispute, then, the value of the Union; I do not believe in it. Grant all it claims as the parent of wealth, it has not produced MEN. DANIEL WEBSTER said that the virtue of the colonial institutions was, that they produced WASHINGTON. The sin of the Union is, that it manufactured WEBSTER. (Laughter and applause.) Carlyle says, the test of governments is the *men* they make. Where are our *men*? The colonies produced the Revolutionary men; in the "full tide of successful experiment," we have resulted in Caleb Cushing and Franklin Pierce, and the knaves of the present day! That is the full bloom of the Union!

The highest test of government is as a school. It is noble men that prove noble governments. Where are they? The education of the nation, political and civil,—that is the government. What has it amounted to? I do not consider that ricketty machine at Washington as the government. The government is in the elements which produce the national character, and these elements the Union, so far as it has had any power, has influenced to the result of producing such a people as now cover these thirty-one States. The Union! Why, it has so chilled the heart of Massachusetts, that, like a whipped spaniel, she skulked among her hills when her Senator was beaten almost to death in the national capitol. The Union! It has brought thirty States to the level, that they see, crowded in the brief history of Kansas, every despotic aggression which chased the Stuarts out of England, and

changed her government; and yet these tame States vote the same policy into office, after such an exhibition! The Union, to which Mr. WILSON undertakes to sacrifice every possibility of the slave question, has yet to find the first good thing that it has done for twenty millions of people. For Longfellow, the Union is a gallant bark that outrides the storm. A storm! When have we met one till now? Fair weather, halcyon seas, constant prosperity, have been our history;—a boat with every other plank torn off, or a Chinese junk, would have found it difficult to sink. (Laughter.) This is the first storm that has ever assailed her, and now men counsel giving up the voyage and skulking into harbor, for fear of being sunk! Who cares for the "forge" or "heat" in which were shaped the "anchors" of such despair? What is a government? It is a machine for education;—and it is *free speech* that endangers this government! *Free speech*, the highest attribute of man;—and yet it is the discussion of a great moral question that endangers the government! Then the sooner it goes to pieces, the better! As JOHN QUINCY ADAMS said to CHARLES SUMNER, when he stood by his sick bed in Boston, "I hope to go back to Washington, in order to teach this Mr. DANIEL WEBSTER that there is something better than the Constitution of the United States,—the justice and liberty which it was intended to preserve." (Loud cheers.)

I object, therefore, altogether, to this exaggerated value placed upon the Union. I do not believe in it. I do not believe history can be made hereafter to bear witness to any high value in the Union. This has been a decent government in its day, but it is pregnant with momentously bad results. It has prostituted the pulpit,—it has made the people cowards,—it has made slavery triumphant,—it has made literature vassal and corrupt,—it has transformed twenty millions of people into slave-catchers. What a history! We launched out with the popular determination that the territory of the Union should be secured to liberty. The spirit with which we set out, under the ordinance of 1787, made all national territory sacred to liberty. We came down to 1819, and cowardice, born of the Union, gave up half; we came down to 1852, and treason, in the garb of cowardice, gave up the whole to slavery. Behold the history of the Union! Willingly do I join issue with the Union-worshippers on the value of their idol. I say, the Fugitive Slave Law was not possible, and could not have been executed, in the city of Boston, in 1789; it was executed there in 1850. Apply the torture of any circumstances to John Jay, Luther Martin, Chancellor Wythe, Patrick Henry, and never could you extort such speeches as Daniel Webster

made the last two years of his life. The Union—behold the value of it! If property be every thing—if, as Daniel Webster said, the whole purpose of government is to protect property,—I do not know but possibly banks make better dividends with the Union than they would without, though of that I have serious doubts; but if men be the object of government,—if liberty be the object of government,—if high thought, high character, a noble party, a noble State, with noble impulses, be the test of government, this Union is a failure; for the character of this nation has been so barbarized in fifty years, that we must hide our faces when we compare the Senate of to-day with that over which even Aaron Burr presided. Look at the outrage on CHARLES SUMNER! Men have been assassinated before. If a man trusts himself with gold in the purlieus of great cities, he is very likely to be assassinated. One who quarrels with drunken bullies in the haunts of vice, risks assassination. But did you ever see before, in the Senate chamber, the focus of a civilized State, the Capitol on which millions of eyes are fixed,—did you ever see an assassination there, with half a score of what are called the "statesmen" of the land looking on, still and silent? I undertake to say, that in view of all the circumstances, the outrage on CHARLES SUMNER is not to be paralleled in the history of civilized States. You never saw the assassination, in cool blood, of an unarmed man, with twelve of his peers, the foremost men in office, in a civilized community, present, and not an arm lifted in his defence; and yet you now see a State, and, perhaps, one half the whole country, daring to vindicate and applaud such an act! That is the barbarism to which the Union has brought these States! You know it stands out in all history as the atrocious crime which countervailed all the merits of Oliver Cromwell, that he undertook to put his military boot on the Speaker's mace in the House of Commons. Every man who has written history since has regarded that as the lowest point which English history has ever touched. That very act was repeated on the virgin soil of Kansas, and it hardly waked a ripple on the calm sea of American life. Such is the result of a Union to which men are told to sacrifice justice, liberty and honor, the welfare of the slave, and an effectual resistance to the Slave Power! I do not believe in it. I would like to have those men who are ringing perpetual changes on the Union come here, and tell us what good the Union has ever done. It has made our large cities the scenes of riot and of fugitive slave surrenders; it has filled our pulpits with Deweys and Adamses; it has filled our literature with Hillards, and Pierponts, and Bancrofts. I curse

the Union in behalf of the white man, as well as a friend of the black race. There never was a greater mistake than this idolatry of the juggle of a Union, and never until we cut loose from it shall we have any hope of a system of honorable government, or any right to respect ourselves.

I do not, then, tremble to approach the question of breaking up the Union. I have no faltering fear, no timid balancing of arguments;—my inmost soul is penetrated with the conviction that it is a magnificent conspiracy against justice, and accursed of God. (Loud applause.) Every page of our history since '89 is black with the Union. There is not a page of it to which an American can recur with any pride or honor; and when a pen as impartial as that of HILDRETH writes that history, you see it—every man must see it. It is nothing but the vain-glorious eulogy of Fourth of July orators; the swollen selfishness of wealth eager for more gain; of Commerce, crying "Hush!" in order to have customers; of merchants, in trembling deference to somebody out of whom they expect to make a dollar of profit;—it is only petty lawyers like Curtis, who imagine, because they can draw writs, they can meddle with statesmanship, (laughter and applause,) that have undertaken to show the value of the Union. It is rotten all over! It is one great sore! It has proved on a magnificent scale, as if written by the finger of God "betwixt Orion and the Pleiades," that Lamartine was right when he said, "Man never fastened one end of a chain round the neck of his brother, that God's own hand did not fasten the other end round the neck of the oppressor." (Cheers.) It is one great lazaar-house of slave and slaveholder, with the North buying coward bread in office by dastardly silence, and vociferating "Great is the Union!" in voices thick with blood.

I go for the dissolution of the Union, first, as an Anti-Slavery measure. I would put it to every man who loves the Constitution of the United States in its essential features, if he would vote for that instrument to-day, as it stands? I do not believe there is a Republican who hears me, who, if he were standing to-day, as men stood in 1789, and this Constitution lay on a table before him, and he were asked, "Will you vote for it?"—I do not believe, I say, that there is a Republican who hears me who would vote for it. You may bolster up the Constitution as something which, having come down to you from the fathers of the government, you are bound to support; but is there a man who, if he could have his choice, would to-day say "Aye" to that Constitution? You know there is not; and every argument

that undertakes to make it out faultless is only an attempt to hold it up because it exists, and because men suppose it for their interest to maintain it.

In the first place, my opposition to the Union is one of personal honor and duty;—and this is the strongest consideration—the nucleus;—all the others are incidental, secondary. It is a question of personal honor and duty with me. I am not going into the question of the technicalities of the Constitution,—I do not care now about them. For the purposes of this hour, we may take it for granted that the Constitution, as at present interpreted and executed, is a pro-slavery Constitution—used by Slavery for its own purposes; that the power of dictating the course to be pursued under that Constitution is in the hands of the Slave Power. You know what that Slave Power is. I do not mean by that phrase an exclusively Southern power. The Slave Power is here in Worcester just as much as in Charleston, S. C. The Slave Power is three-fold; it has the power of wealth—two thousand millions of dollars invested in slaves, drawing to it the sympathy of all other kinds of capital. That is the first power, and in the nineteenth century, the money sway is omnipotent. Then it has, secondly, the aristocracy of the Constitution; and, thirdly, the prejudice against color. The aristocracy of the Constitution!—where have you seen an aristocracy with half its power? You may take a small town here in New England, with a busy, active population of 2500, and three or four such men as Gov. Aiken, of South Carolina, riding leisurely to the polls, and throwing their visiting cards in for ballots, will blot out the entire influence of that New England town in the Federal Government. That is your Republicanism! Then, when you add to that the element of prejudice, which is concentrated in the epithet "nigger," you make the three-strand cable of the Slave Power—the prejudice of race, the omnipotence of money, and the almost irresistible power of aristocracy. That is the Slave Power. Whatever you make of the Constitution, its administration is in the hands of the Slave Power. When Henry Wilson goes up to the Senate of the United States,—if he wishes a part of that Government,—he must vote men into office, and vote money to carry on the Government; and he knows if he carries it on, he carries on the Slave Power. He knows that when he pays John McLean, the Judge of Ohio, he pays him for returning fugitive slaves. ("Hear," "hear.") When he votes Judge Leavitt's salary, he votes to pay him for that trick which plunged Margaret Garner back into the hell of bondage, and

cheated the State of Ohio out of her rights; and I want to know when or where the Republican party, or any other party, ever avowed their purpose to be, to get the power of this Government into their hands in order that no dollar in its treasury shall be allowed to go for the support of the Slave Power? Until they do this, politics is personably dishonorable to an Abolitionist. It is paying a Government, two-thirds of which is directly, and the other third indirectly, covered all over with pro-slavery service, from the Judge on the Supreme Bench, down to the Marshal in the Courts. The bill which was paid for returning Anthony Burns was so mixed up with the salaries of officers, that it could not be disintegrated without stopping the whole appropriation bill. I deem the noblest piece of work the Republican party ever attempted was the effort to stop the appropriation bill. Chief Justice Marshall said once, that whenever Senators were omitted to be chosen, the United States Government fell to pieces. Why do you not let it fall to pieces? As at present constituted, it is the right arm of the Slave Power, and you know it. South Carolina cannot breathe nor get her food a day out of the Union. Bankrupt, she talks of "walking out of the Union"! Let her beg money to buy the crutches she stands on first! (Laughter and applause.)

I say, sir, it is a matter of personal honor and duty with me. I do not see how any man can volunteer the slightest amount of personal or pecuniary support to a Government which, whatever was its intent in 1789, is now practically a pro-slavery institution. I thanked God when I looked into the eyes of ANTHONY BURNS, and, in reply to his agonized inquiry, "Can you do nothing for me?" was obliged to answer, "Nothing"—I thanked God that at least I could say, "I never lifted a finger to build one stone of the Government that is resting upon your heart to-day." That Government returned ANTHONY BURNS; that Government is organized year after year, and every dollar in its treasury is spent in direct or in indirect support of slavery. You know a religious man, for instance, protests against idolatry, and the support of idolatrous Governments in Asia. Here is a Government just as much permeated by slavery as China or Japan with idolatry, and I cannot vote under it, nor voluntarily support it. I do not care for parchments; they are not the Government. There are elements beneath the parchment that fashion the Government, and among these elements, first and beyond all others, is this Slave Power, which controls the Union. I do not know what it may be ten or fifteen years hence; I do not know what it may be when it is changed; I only know

what it is now, and I say, no Abolitionist can support it. If there is any man who can tell me how, I should like to have him do so.

Then, again, how is the Republican party ever to gain supremacy in the Government? Certainly, by turning every atom of patronage and pecuniary profit in the keeping of the Federal Government to the support of freedom. You know that the policy has been always acted upon, ever since Washington,—and it has been openly avowed ever since Fillmore,—that no man was to receive any office who was not sound on the slavery question. You remember the debate in the Senate, when that was distinctly avowed to be the policy of Mr. Fillmore. You remember Mr. Clay letting it drop out accidentally, in debate, that the slaveholders had always closely watched the Cabinet, and kept a majority there, in order to preserve the ascendancy of slavery. This is the policy which, in the course of fifty years, has built up the Slave Power. Now, how is the Republican party ever to beat that Power down? By reversing that policy, in favor of freedom. CASSIUS CLAY said to me, two years ago, "If you will allow me to have the patronage of this Government five years, and exercise it remorselessly, down to New Orleans,—never permit any one but an avowed Abolitionist to hold office under the Federal Government,—and I will revolutionize the slave States themselves in two Administrations." That is a scheme of efficient politics. But the Republican party has never yet even professed any such policy. Mr. Greeley, on the contrary,—and I take the Republican party as the highest type of political action at the present time,—avowed in the *Tribune*, that he had often voted for a slaveholder willingly, and he never expected the time would come when he should lay down the principle of refusing to vote for a slaveholder to office;—and that sentiment has not only been reiterated by others of the Republican party, but has never been disavowed by any one. Suppose that you could develop politics up to this idea, that the whole patronage of the Government should be turned in favor of Abolition. It would take two or three generations to overturn what the Slave Power has done in sixty years, with the power of aristocracy and the strength of prejudice on its side. With the patronage of the Government in its control, the Republican party must work slowly to regenerate the Government against those elements in opposition, when, with them in its favor, the Slave Power has been some sixty years in bringing about such a result as we see around us. To reverse this, and work only with the patronage of the Government, it would take you long to effect the cure. In my soul, I believe that a dissolution of the Union, sure to

result speedily in the abolition of slavery, would be a lesser evil than the slow, faltering, diseased, gradual dying out of slavery, constantly poisoning us with the festering remains of this corrupt political, social and literary state. I believe a sudden, conclusive, definite disunion, resulting in the abolition of slavery speedily, in the disruption of the Northern mind from all connection with it, all vassalage to it, *immediately*, would be a better, healthier, and more wholesome cure, than to let the Republican party, even if it could ever gain the power, exert this gradual influence through the power of the Government for thirty or sixty years.

We are talking about the best way of getting rid of a great national evil. Mr. WILSON's way is to put down the Union as a "fixed fact," and then educate politics up to a certain level. In that way we have got to live, like Sinbad, with Cushing, and Choate, and Hillard, and Hallett, and men like them, on our shoulders for the next thirty or forty years, — with the Deweys and President Lords, and all that class of men, — with the Hunker School Committees approving George Hillard's school-books, from which no young man, even with a million-power microscope, would discern that WHITTIER ever wrote an anti-slavery line, — all this timid servility of the press, — all this lack of virtue and manhood, — all this corruption of the pulpit, — all this fossil hunkerism, — all this selling of the soul for a mess of pottage, — is to linger, — working in the body politic for thirty or forty years, and we are gradually to eliminate the disease! What an awful future! What a miserable chronic disease! What a wreck of a noble nation the American Republic is to be for fifty years!

That is HENRY WILSON's cure — and why? Only to save a piece of parchment that ELBRIDGE GERRY had instinct enough to think did not deserve saving, as long ago as 1789! He would leave New York united to New Orleans, with the hope (sure to be baulked) of getting freer and freer from year to year. I want to place her, at once, in the same relation towards New Orleans that she bears to Liverpool. (Applause.) You can do it, the moment you break the political tie. What will that do? I will tell you. The New York pulpit is to-day one end of a magnetic telegraph, of which the New Orleans cotton market is the other. The New York stock market is one end of the magnetic telegraph, and the Charleston *Mercury* is the other. New York statesmanship! Why, even in the lips of Seward, it is sealed, or half sealed, by considerations that take their rise in the cane-brakes and cotton-fields of fifteen States. Break up this Union, and the ideas of

South Carolina will have no more influence on Seward than those of Palmerston. The wishes of New Orleans will have no more influence on Chief Justice Shaw than the wishes of London. The threats and party tactics of Brooks, Soulé, Blair and Benton will have no more influence on the *Tribune* than the thunders of the London *Times* on the hopes of the Chartists. Bancroft will no longer write history with one eye fixed on Democratic success, nor Webster invent "laws of God" to please Mr. Senator Douglas. We shall have as close connection, as much commerce; we shall still have a common language, a common faith and common race, the same common social life; we shall intermarry just the same; we shall have steamers running just as often and just as rapidly as now. But what cares Dr. Dewey, in New York, for the opinion of Liverpool? Nothing! What cares he for the opinion of Washington? Every thing! Break the link, and New York springs up like the fountain relieved from mountain load, and assumes her place among decent cities. (Applause.) We mean no special praise of the English courts, pulpit or press, by these comparisons; our only wish is, to show that however close the commercial relations might continue to be between North and South, and in spite of that common faith and common tongue and common history which would continue to hold these thirty States together, still, as in the case of this country and England, wedded still by the same ties, the mere sundering of a political union would leave each half free, as that of 1776 did, from a very large share of the corrupt influence of the other.

That is what I mean by Disunion. I mean to take Massachusetts, and leave her exactly as she is, commercially. She shall manufacture for the South just as Lancashire does. I know what an influence the South has on the manufacturers and clergy of England;—that is irresistible in the nature of things. We have only human nature to work with, and we cannot raise it up to the level of angels. We shall never get beyond the sphere of human selfishness; but we can lift this human nature up to a higher level, if we can but remove the weight of this political relation which now rests upon it. What I would do with Massachusetts is this—I would make her, in relation to South Carolina, just what England is. I would to God that I could float her off, and anchor her in mid ocean! (Loud applause.) "Where shall disunion commence?" Why, if it cannot commence any where else, I would commence it round Plymouth Rock. (Cheers.) Begin again, and see if we cannot do as much in 236 years as our fathers did—create a great nation out

of this wilderness. Would to God we had only the difficulties of an empty wilderness to deal with!

What I mean by Disunion is simply that breaking of the political arrangements and connections — you cannot break the others — which would leave us our Websters and Everetts — raw material, out of which, as Dr. Johnson said of Scotchmen, "if you caught them very young, you might make something" — (laughter and applause); that is, if you caught them young, and subjected them to wholesome influences, kept them out of the fatal maelstrom of national temptation. Henry Wilson was a much more decent man when he was not tall enough to look over the fences of Massachusetts, than when he got so high that he could see as far off as Washington; then his head turned slightly, and now he values Washington far more than he did when his ambition was content with the little Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

Then, if you ask me what influence this would have on slavery, I answer, it would have, in the first place, the influence of political economy; that, taking from the Government the support of Northern sympathy and countenance, the South would have to set about getting a government. Government is an expensive luxury. You must get taxes to support it. Where will you levy your taxes? They must rest on productions. Productions are the result of skilled labor. You must educate your laborer, if you would have the means for carrying on a government. Despotisms are cheap; free governments are a dear luxury — the machinery is complicated and expensive. If the South wants even a theoretical Republic, she must pay for it — she must have a basis for taxation. How will she pay for it? Why, Massachusetts, with a million workmen, men, women and children, — the little feet that can just toddle bringing chips from the wood-pile, — Massachusetts only pays her own board and lodging, and lays by about three per cent. a year. And South Carolina, with one half idlers, and the other half slaves, doing only half the work of a free man, — only one-quarter of the population actually at work — how much do you suppose she lays up? Lays up a loss! (Laughter.) By all the laws of political economy, she lays up bankruptcy, — of course she does! Put her out, and let her see how sheltered she has been from the laws of trade by the Union. The free labor of the North pays her plantation patrol, we pay for her government, we pay for her postage, and for every thing else. Launch her out, and let her see if she can make the year's ends meet. And when she tries, she must educate her labor in order to get the basis for taxation. Educate slaves! Make a locomotive with its furnaces of open

wire work, fill them with anthracite coal, and when you have raised it to white heat, mount and drive it through the doors of Oliver Whipple's powder manufactory, and you are safe, compared with a slaveholding community educating its slaves. (Laughter and applause.) But South Carolina must do it, in order to get the basis for taxation to support an independent government. The moment she does it, she removes the safeguard of slavery. What is the contest in Virginia now? Between the men who want to make their slaves mechanics, for the enhanced wages it will secure, and the men who oppose, for fear of the influence it will have on the general security of slave property and white throats. Just that dispute will go on, if ever the Union is dissolved. Slavery comes to an end by the laws of trade. Hang up your Sharp's rifle, my valorous friend! The slave does not ask the help of your musket. He only says, like old Diogenes to Alexander, "Stand out of my light!" Just take your awkward proportions, you Yankee Democrat and Republican, out of the light and heat of God's laws of political economy, and they will melt the slave's chains away! (Enthusiastic applause.) Take your distorted Union, your nightmare monster, out of the light and range of those laws of trade and competition; then, without any sacrifice on your part, slavery will go to pieces! God made it a law of his universe, that villany should always be loss; and if you will only not attempt, with your puny efforts, to stand betwixt the inevitable laws of God's kingdom, as you are doing to-day, and have done for sixty years, by the vigor that the industry of sixteen States has been able to infuse into the sluggish veins of the South, slavery will drop to pieces by the very influence of the competition of the nineteenth century. That is what we mean by Disunion! (Applause.)

The slaveholder says that the Union is his safeguard. Mr. Wilson is for preserving it at every hazard. I like to learn from the enemy. If the slaveholder loves the Union, I hate it; the love of so sagacious a tyrant is authority enough for my hate. (Applause.) If the slaveholder clings to the Union, it is instinct. "Instinct is a great matter," says Shakspeare. Every Abolitionist that ever got his head above water was saluted by the title "Traitor!" The slaveholder knew what he was about when he said so, for he felt that if the man ever got his heart also above water, he would feel that treason was his first duty. The Union has been too great a temptation for Northern liberty. The South has bought up our great men faster than nature could make them. (Applause.) It always will. It is true of our pulpit, of our literature, of our statesmanship — the temptation is too great. All the temptations of

self-interest are on the side of slavery. You say you are going to change them. How are you going to change them? You cannot change them by the Sermon on the Mount. I do not doubt the power of the Sermon on the Mount in the long run. Truth will conquer, if you give her time. Centuries hence, Ideas will conquer even the material strength of the country; but to-day, in Wall Street, two per cent. a month is its Sermon on the Mount (laughter); and as long as it is so, Wall Street will bow before two thousand million of dollars, invested in slaves; and as long as that is so, the Bankses, who think themselves fortunate to get upon the steps of the Merchants' Exchange, will bow to Wall Street, and its Gospel of two per cent. a month.

You cannot raise politics above the level of the average public sentiment. I know that, in the long process of time, we could reëducate the nation. But what new circumstances that far future may bring, I know not. We are working with the tools nearest our hands. I believe that Banks and Webster, and that class of men, are as good men as in the ordinary—the average. What I want is, to tempt them to justice. When you want an Irish donkey to go ahead, you put a bundle of hay before his nose. That is just what the South does with every politician, —it has a bribe for them all. As long as men like Caleb Cushing can have seventy million of dollars per annum to bestow in patronage, I have no hope for the nation; and I do not believe there is but one Caleb Cushing in all Yankeedom;—Nature did not "break the die" when she had made him. (Loud applause.) Suppose such a man, with seventy million of dollars to spend annually, to go out into the highways and byways, and into the House of Representatives of an Anti-Slavery Congress, and do you believe that within our day there is any hope of such a state of immaculate virtue, of high-toned honor, as will secure such a momentous triumph as that of Liberty against Slavery? I doubt it. At any rate, the most hopeful method of getting out of danger is, not to struggle vainly against the Cataract of Niagara, but to get *out* of the sweep of the current. The Republican is forced to confess that the Slave Power is almost as omnipotent as the downward current of Niagara, and he proposes to go up the Falls! Now, Disunion means to avoid them; or rather, it proposes to dig down the whole rampart of Table Rock, and produce a dead level, without a current. (Cheers.) It proposes to take bad circumstances out of the way. It proposes to take down this government that our fathers created, which is found not to work well. That is all it proposes.

Does any man think that anarchy will result? Why should it?

Anarchy does not consist in the absence of parchments. The same conservative elements that keep the government in place now, will exist then. Massachusetts does not make money merely because South Carolina has the right to whip slaves. That is not the element of her prosperity. The element lies in the fact, as WARD BEECHER says, that there are more brains in a Yankee's hands than in most men's heads. Therefore we make money; therefore we are a well-ordered State; and we shall always be so while that fact remains. Dissolution of the Union gets rid of slavery, because it is an artificial institution, backed up by artificial laws, which, when you let down the waters to a common level, must go to pieces by the action of gravity. The dissolution of the Union is removing the dam. To-day the white man stands with his heel on the head of the slave. You and I stand behind him—you, voters, directly, and all of us, by the impossibility of making our protest fully known. When dissolution takes place, I do not say the slave will cut his master's throat, or burn his mansion-house. All I say is, that he will probably try to do it, unless the master plants in his heart a motive not to do so; and until he does, "God speed the first insurrection in the Carolinas!" I have no love for insurrections; but "Hands off!" is a good Saxon motto. Let the two races fight it out; and if the white man has no means of defence, by making the black man love him, then he will suffer for the misgovernment of two centuries. That is his own lookout. Gen. WILSON says, he "believes that the liberal, high-minded, *just* (!) men of the South will, in their own time and in their own way, bring about a safe emancipation." I never knew of a race of oppressors that was preached into doing justice; they have always been bullied into it. If any man thinks otherwise, let him show me a single instance where a powerful, despotic class ever voluntarily surrendered power out of its own hands. I believe in the slaveholder being brought to give bonds for good behavior, by the circumstances in which he is to be placed, by the necessities of his position. Talk of chivalry! The whole South is one great magazine of cowards! Ten slaves in the upper corner of Tennessee are *suspected* (for they did not keep the poor fellows alive long enough to prove it) of an intention to rebel, and the easternmost corner of chivalrous Virginia trembles! too mad with fear to wait the second news from Tennessee, that there was no plot or purpose to rise. Our old Professor of Natural Philosophy, John Farrar, used to say to us,—with great solemnity,—"If I touch that spot, the universe trembles." It was true; and when a slave makes an impudent answer on the banks of the Mississippi, South Carolina trembles. That

is the chivalry of the South! That present fear is kept down by the consciousness that sixteen States, with their powerful free blood and organized strength, stand round the system. Take it off! That fear is God's own stimulus to virtue—let it have full play! When they set horses to run in the Roman races, each horse bears about him a little net-work of pointed pricks, that the faster he goes, makes him run yet faster. I would set the slaveholder to running, with four millions of slaves for the pricks. (Applause.) Dissolution is my method for that race. Dissolution, in other words, is only the philosophy of letting natural causes have free play. I would take down the *dam* of the Union, and let loose the torrent of God's own water-courses; and, like every current, you may be sure it will clear a channel for itself. (Loud applause.)

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